

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-48 are pending in the application, of which Claims 1, 12, 23, 34, and 45-48 are independent claims. Claims 24-33 and 35-44 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Claims 1, 7-11, 23, 29-33, 45, and 47 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b). In addition, the Abstract, Specification, and Claim 46 are subject to objections.

The Applicants note with appreciation that Claims 12-22, 34, 46, and 48 are allowed and that Claims 2-6 and 24-28 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form.

In response, the Abstract, Specification, and certain claims have been amended to cure the formal defects as noted by the Examiner. In addition, the claims have been amended to recite the allowable subject matter. Claims have been cancelled and new dependent claims have been added to the application.

As for the objections, the Applicants appreciate the Examiner's efforts in noticing the errors. The amendments are believed to cure the objections and withdrawal of the objections is respectfully requested.

As for the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, independent Claims 24 and 34 have been amended to properly recite an antecedent basis for "The leading field" as recited in dependent Claims 24-33 and 35-44. Reconsideration of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112 is respectfully requested.

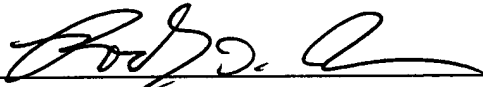
As for the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), independent Claims 1, 23, 45 and 47 have been amended to recite the allowable subject matter of dependent Claim 4 and 26, which are now cancelled. This amendment is not an acquiescence to the rejection and the Applicants reserve the right to seek protection for the original claims in a continuation application. Reconsideration of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) is respectfully requested.

**CONCLUSION**

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that all claims are in condition for allowance, and it is respectfully requested that the application be passed to issue. If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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